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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 MADRID 001324

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER  
MORATINOS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Bob Manzanares; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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U.S.-SPAIN RELATIONS

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16. (C) Moratinos said he looked forward to his mid-April visit to Washington, the first of several Spanish ministerial visits intended to help reinvigorate the bilateral relationship, including the visits of the Interior and Justice ministers to discuss counterterrorism cooperation. Moratinos said it was important, especially for Spain, that his visit to Washington convey the sense that U.S.-Spanish relations are moving in the right direction. "We can't fabricate a honeymoon, but we must show that there are areas where we can work together." He said Minister of Defense Jose Bono had enjoyed a productive meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld on the margins of the Nice ministerial and anticipated a useful exchange during his early May visit to Washington. Moratinos observed that several military contracts involving U.S. companies were in play.

17. (C) Moratinos recognized the difficulties in bilateral relations over the last year, but asserted that Zapatero's Socialist government was in a better position to argue for strong relations with the USG because the Socialists enjoyed greater credibility with traditionally anti-American elements in Spanish society and could bring them along. He suggested that the absence of close cultural ties between Spain and the U.S. was a factor in the Spanish public's skepticism towards the U.S. and urged increased attention by both countries to cultural exchanges. On economic issues, Moratinos said U.S. and Spanish officials had recently worked together to resolve a trade dispute involving rice and an illegal sale to Iran by a Spanish company. He said Spain was worried about declining U.S. investment in Spain and hoped to be able to reverse this trend.

18. (C) Moratinos praised the visit of President Bush to Europe in February, which he said clearly demonstrated the USG's willingness to work with the EU as a whole.

19. (C) The Deputy Secretary said he understood that the GOS was dealing with challenging issues. He expressed the USG's satisfaction with the good level of counterterrorism cooperation between Spain and the USG and said he hoped the upcoming visits of the Interior and Justice ministers would further strengthen our security relationship. He thanked Spain for its leadership of a PRT in western Afghanistan and participation in FSB Herat. The Deputy Secretary noted that Afghanistan would require further assistance as the September parliamentary elections approached.

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MANZANARES